

THE UNBIASED RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST



INTRODUCTION:

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) are the new vision for business owners. The concept has never been more valued, and now it's turning into a plan to follow.

As a business owner or a hiring manager, you are surely looking for the talents that help you tap into a wider pool of achievements, productivity, innovation and overall profitability. We get it, we are around them and they are the BEST!



This is why **we created this checklist**; to help business owners and hiring managers remove biases from their diverse recruitment process.

But before we share the actual steps, you need to know different types of cognitive biases in recruitment and how they affect us.

Note: the following definitions will have two main characters:

1- Ourselves, as the recruiter.

2- Max, as the poor applicant facing all those biases.



Confirmation bias

Everyone loves to trust their instincts and judgments, seek out information and ideas that fit their beliefs, and disregard any other. In an interview, we do that by asking irrelevant questions that prove our points and ignore the facts that might contradict them. That means ruling out Max, who could have been a great candidate for not sharing our assumptions.

Expectation anchor

When we have a preconceived idea about a situation without really knowing all the facts, this is when our expectations are born. We will evaluate Max upon them, accepting or refusing him because of an individualized expectation.

Affect heuristics

Simply, this is us taking a mental shortcut to a decision upon our predictions or relying on what the majority is doing. We are social creatures, and that means we usually go with the herd without wondering about facts. So we will predict Max's abilities by superficial factors like the way he talks or where he comes from.

Halo effect

We value Max because he is associated with a certain quality we like. For example, he went to the same school. We will dismiss any other important traits like maybe he is not that good at his job, only because we are blinded by that one shiny quality.

Horn effect

On the other hand, Max will be ruled out because he has a negative trait we hate so much that blinds us from seeing any of his good ones. For example, Max has loud laughter that annoys us so we cannot hear his experience and fit for the role, only that laughter.

Overconfidence bias

This bias happens when we overestimate our competencies and underestimate our chances of falling short. This means we will subjectively trust our judgment of whether Max is a good fit for our company or he is just not right for us. We will justify our decision by our confidence, not by facts.

Similarity attraction bias

We like those who share our love for the same football team or sense of fashion, it makes us think they also share our experience or performance. Because we will spend most of our days with Max, we want him to have the same preferences, we will even forget about the real job description and choose him because of our characteristic similarities

Contrast effect / judgement bias

To contrast is to compare. When we screen through multiple resumes, we are not judging Max's suitability for the role but we are comparing him to the previous resume. We overlooked his skills and traits and merely compared him with others.

Conformity bias

Human beings desire to fit in, we desire to follow the beliefs and behaviors of the group we are a part of. Because of that, peer pressure affects our decision.

Instead of choosing Max for his experience, we choose him because this is what others would do.

Intuition

This is when we say “I trust my gut” instead of “His abilities fit the role”.

We are basing our decision on emotions, individualism and mere sense.

Max is now working with us because we had a good feeling about him.

Beauty bias

Studies have found that people often take beautiful people at face value, and assume their beauty affects positively on their performance.

Because Max is such a handsome man, we decided he will be very successful in his job.

Affinity bias

This bias can be so strong that it can cause people to ignore information that does not confirm their beliefs. Focusing on tangible and irrelevant information.

For us and Max, the interview turns into a personal introduction to each other, we are dazzled by the connection created between us rather than looking for eligibility and skills.

Illusory correlation

When we tend to overestimate the strength of the relationship between two variables when non actually exist, this is called illusion.

When we emphasis strongly upon a question or a trait thinking this is the key leading us to a talented candidate, leaving behind the relevant questions.

Prejudices

Prejudices can take many different forms, such as stereotypes, racism, sexism, ageism, lookism, and classism.

Prejudices are a type of discrimination in which we like or dislike Max without a good reason, we are just choosing upon our preferences.

**Oh, these are a lot of biases that can affect our hiring decisions and the recruitment process.
That's why it's important to have a fair hiring process.**

Here are the steps to make your hiring process/
recruitment process unbiased:

1- PREPARATION AND STRUCTURE:

- Diversity is a process. Introduce your company in the job description and align it with business value propositions and culture.
- Use a well-defined competency model. Identify what skills you are searching for.
- A great definition of the skills is personality traits, aptitude, knowledge, and motivation. Determine who you want to work with.
- Structuring your process and controlling how you regulate relevant data is key for your decision-making and analysis.
- Stop making endless wish lists. Open up the adverts instead of listing criteria that might potentially and unconsciously exclude groups.
- Exclude pictures. In recruitment that does not help us overcome our preconceived opinions.
- Make the process anonymous and keep it anonymous as long as possible.
- Talk about expectations early on in the process to break the myth of “over qualification”.
- Gather the previous checks and turn them into a job description that includes all your business needs.
- Define what job boards you are posting on.
- No cover letters, they contain a lot of unstructured information that can trigger bias.

2- AUTOMATED SCREENING AND PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT:

- Integrate a screening step before even looking at a resume. This will assist you with creating stats and data for your process.
- After scanning through applications, automate the shortlist process using AI tools to avoid unconscious bias and to save time.
- Use tools to match what your candidates are saying in resumes and the job description.
- Use psychometric assessments to dig deeper into the personalities and traits behind the CVs.
- After shortlisting, filter the data that you won't need in the next phases of the interview process.
- Schedule interviews with those who most likely will be a good fit to your business.

3- SKILLS AND CODE ASSESSMENTS:

- Set your goals and insights needed for the skills test. Collect the right data at the right part of the process.
- Write down the challenges and assessments you want to test your applicants with to know the levels of their abilities.
- In the case of technicality tests, depending on the position posted; test them with the easy and hard levels to know their strengths and weaknesses.
- In case you are not a technical recruiter, find the right tool that generates that code assessment to make sure that you know your applicant's abilities well.
- Review and rank your applicants according to their results alongside their previous personality assessment tests.
- Again, match those answers and your needs and decide who moves on to the next phase of live interviews.

4- LIVE INTERVIEWS:

- Set your goals and insights needed for the skills test. Collect the right data at the right part of the process.
- Write down the challenges and assessments you want to test your applicants with to know.
- Create objective and comparable data. Select your parameters, stick to them throughout the process and make sure you use the same data for all your applicants when reviewing.
- Tonality is vital. Certain words may attract certain applicants. For example, some words are more masculine and might unconsciously exclude potential talents.
- Conduct live code interviews, see for yourself how your team will work and solve the problems facing them.
- Understand the fact that interviews are biased by design. If using video interviews, ask the candidate to turn off their camera and try to listen only to the voice. Or use Velents for fully automated-interviews, to create a unique experience for your candidates.
- Don't ask about information that won't help you. Age, social status, sexuality, gender,..etc. The interview is about the position only.

4- LIVE INTERVIEWS:

- Make sure you have a good structure, use skill-based questions, make sure you get all of the answers written down, stick to your questions, and don't improvise.
- Do not assume things from the candidate's answer, instead, ask them and bring clarification if something is unclear.
- Do not trust your gut. Your gut is colored with your own background, using only your data, tests, results and your business needs.
- Take notes during the interviews, take those notes into your evaluation and use the best of it to make your final decision.

5- EVALUATION:

- Separate your decision-makers. If you have several recruiters or decision-makers in your process, make sure their opinions are separated from each other to avoid conformity bias.
- Use all your scorecards, and make sure to evaluate candidates according to the same parameters.
- It's crucial to remember that those candidates came through all the previous stages, CVs, assessments, challenges and live interviews. Don't judge them only by their interview.
- Remember to take your time, think well, and evaluate more than once to make sure you have taken the best decision using the data in hand.
- It is quite hard to make such an important decision without any biases, not impossible but hard. You can always use AI automation to avoid the bad decision, biases and endless time this process takes.

THANK

YOU

WWW.VELENENTS.COM